



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

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For Immediate Release

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June 12, 2006
PR -062

Synthetic Turf Fields Underway

Groundbreaking Slated For Wakefield, Mason District

The Fairfax County Park Authority will break ground on two synthetic turf fields on Friday, July 28, 2006 marking the beginning of an ambitious effort to increase field capacity and availability throughout Fairfax County. Ceremonies will take place at 9 a.m. at Wakefield Park in Annandale and at 10:30 a.m. at Mason District Park, also located in Annandale.

Construction will begin on existing rectangular Athletic Field #3 at Mason District Park on July 31st. The contractor, Atlas Track, Inc. of Oregon is the general contractor for the installation of the synthetic turf. Construction access will be from the park entrance off Columbia Pike and may impact public parking areas. Construction will be completed in time for the spring playing season.

Construction will also begin at Wakefield Park on existing rectangular Athletic Field #5. The same contractor will be used. Construction access will be from the park entrance off of Braddock Road. Again, public parking areas may be impacted. Completion is scheduled for early 2007 in time for the spring season. Both projects were scheduled in order to minimize impact on the playing season for the many sports groups which utilize these fields and have contributed to their current upgrades. Funding for these fields is provided through the athletic user groups and Fairfax County Government. Contributing groups include Annandale Boys and Girls Club at Mason District Park and the Braddock Road Youth Club, Fairfax Women's Soccer Association and Northern Virginia Soccer League at Wakefield Park.

The Park Authority, in partnership with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, the Department of Community and Recreation Services, the Athletic Council and local youth athletic organizations is working to address a countywide shortage of athletic fields. Synthetic turf fields are gaining popularity nationwide and provide an ideal solution to field shortages.

Synthetic turf fields can replace existing grass fields and provide added capacity through increased use. Installation of 10 synthetic turf fields is the equivalent of building 16 natural surface fields. They are durable enough to allow play immediately following inclement weather, as well as providing extended play schedules. Requirements for maintenance are reduced as well as the need for new field locations which impact woodlands and create the need for new amenities. The Park Authority Board adopted a service level standard of one rectangular field per 2,700 population. The current shortage exceeds 90 fields countywide.

For more information and directions to the parks contact the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662.

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